

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of the Claims

1. (Currently Amended) A joint prosthesis system for joining a first bone having a first surface to a second bone having a second surface ~~in a patient~~, comprising:
 - at least one bioabsorbable spacer adapted to be interposed between the first surface and the second surface; and
 - at least one connector adapted to be fixedly attached to the first bone and the second bone, at least a portion of the at least one connector restricting the lateral movement of said at least one bioabsorbable spacer ~~the at least one connector connected to the at least one bioabsorbable spacer~~ by contacting the outer surface of the at least one bioabsorbable spacer, ~~and disposed to prevent lateral movement of the at least one bioabsorbable spacer~~ the at least one connector comprising autogenous soft or fibrous tissue ~~constructed of the patient's own tissue~~.
2. (Previously Presented) The joint prosthesis system as set forth in claim 1, wherein said at least one bioabsorbable spacer is cylindrical.
3. (Previously Presented) The joint prosthesis system as set forth in claim 1, wherein said at least one bioabsorbable spacer has a porosity of about 50 μm to 1000 μm .
4. (Previously Presented) The joint prosthesis system as set forth in claim 3, wherein said at least one bioabsorbable spacer comprises a bioabsorbable fabric wrapped to form a cylindrical body.

5. (Previously Presented) The joint prosthesis system as set forth in claim 4, wherein said at least one bioabsorbable spacer further comprises a bioabsorbable film that binds with said bioabsorbable fabric.

6. (Previously Presented) The joint prosthesis system as set forth in claim 5, wherein said bioabsorbable film comprises bioactive components.

7. (Original) The joint prosthesis system as set forth in claim 4, wherein said bioabsorbable fabric is comprised of at least two compounds having different degradation rates in tissue.

8. (Previously Presented) The joint prosthesis system as set forth in claim 4, wherein said bioabsorbable fabric is coated with a material having a degradation rate different than the degradation rate of the bioabsorbable fabric in tissue.

9. (Original) The joint prosthesis system as set forth in claim 7, wherein said bioabsorbable fabric comprises fibers, said fibers comprising a first polymer coated with a second polymer that degrades faster in tissue than said first polymer.

10. (Previously Presented) The joint prosthesis system as set forth in claim 1, wherein said at least one bioabsorbable spacer comprises a bioabsorbable fabric comprising bioabsorbable fibers having a thickness of about 1 μm to 300 μm .

11. (Previously Presented) The joint prosthesis system of claim 1, wherein said at least one bioabsorbable spacer comprises a bioactive agent.

12. (Withdrawn) The joint prosthesis system as set forth in claim 1, wherein said at least one bioabsorbable spacer comprises a cavity.

13. (Withdrawn) The joint prosthesis system as set forth in claim 12, wherein the surface of said cavity has a coating comprising at least one bioactive agent.

14. (Withdrawn) The joint prosthesis system as set forth in claim 13, wherein said at least one bioactive agent is a bone growth promoting substance.

15. (Withdrawn) The joint prosthesis system as set forth in claim 13, wherein said at least one bioactive agent is hyaline cartilage cells.

16. (Withdrawn) The joint prosthesis system as set forth in claim 1, wherein the at least one bioabsorbable spacer comprises two bioabsorbable spacers.

17. (Withdrawn) The joint prosthesis system as set forth in claim 16, wherein at least one of said two bioabsorbable spacers comprises a cavity.

18. (Withdrawn) The joint prosthesis system as set forth in claim 17, wherein the surface of said cavity has a coating comprising at least one bioactive agent.

19. (Withdrawn-currently amended) The joint prosthesis system as set forth in claim 17, wherein the surface of said cavity has a coating comprising hyal[[a]]ine cartilage cells.

20. (Withdrawn) The joint prosthesis system as set forth in claim 1, wherein the at least one bioabsorbable spacer comprises two bioabsorbable spacers, each of said two bioabsorbable spacers having a first side adapted to contact a bone and having a second side adapted to contact the other one of said two bioabsorbable spacers.

21. (Withdrawn) The joint prosthesis system as set forth in claim 20, wherein the first side has a first coating comprising a bioactive agent to promote bone growth, and said second side has a second coating comprising a bioactive agent to promote cartilage growth.

22. (Cancelled)

23. (Currently Amended) A method of treating a joint injury ~~in a patient~~ comprising the steps of:

providing at least one bioabsorbable spacer;

interposing said at least one bioabsorbable spacer between a first bone and a second bone;

connecting said first bone to said second bone with at least one connector such that at least part of said at least one connector restricts the lateral movement of said at least one bioabsorbable spacer ~~is contacting connected to the at least one bioabsorbable spacer~~ by contacting the outer surface of said at least one bioabsorbable spacer, ~~thereby restricting the lateral movement of said at least one bioabsorbable spacer~~ the at least one connector comprising autogenous soft or fibrous tissue ~~constructed of the patient's own tissue~~.

24. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 23, wherein said at least one bioabsorbable spacer is cylindrical.

25. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 23, wherein said at least one bioabsorbable spacer has a porosity of about 50 μm to 1000 μm .

26. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 23, wherein said at least one bioabsorbable spacer comprises a bioabsorbable fabric wrapped to form a cylindrical body.

27. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 26, wherein said at least one bioabsorbable spacer further comprises a bioabsorbable film that binds with said bioabsorbable fabric.

28. (Original) The method of claim 27, wherein said bioabsorbable film includes bioactive components.

29. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 26, wherein said bioabsorbable fabric comprises at least two compounds having different degradation rates in tissue.

30. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 26, wherein said bioabsorbable fabric is coated with a material having a degradation rate different than the degradation rate of the bioabsorbable fabric in tissue.

31. (Original) The method of claim 29, wherein said bioabsorbable fabric comprises fibers, said fibers comprising a first polymer coated with a second polymer that degrades faster in tissue than said first polymer.

32. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 23, wherein said at least one bioabsorbable spacer comprises a bioabsorbable fabric comprising bioabsorbable fibers having a thickness of about 1 μm to 300 μm .

33. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 23, wherein said at least one bioabsorbable spacer comprises a cavity.

34. (Withdrawn-currently amended) The method of claim 23, wherein the at least one bioabsorbable spacer comprises a first and second bioabsorbable spacers and wherein interposing said at least one bioabsorbable spacer comprises interposing the first bioabsorbable spacer between the first bone and the second bioabsorbable spacer, and interposing the second bioabsorbable spacer between the first bioabsorbable spacer and the second bone.

35. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 34, wherein at least one of said first and second bioabsorbable spacers comprises a cavity.

36. (Withdrawn) The joint prosthesis system of claim 16, wherein surfaces of the two bioabsorbable spacers mutually define a cavity.

37. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 34, wherein surfaces of the two bioabsorbable spacers mutually define a cavity.

38. (Previously Presented) The joint prosthesis system as set forth in claim 1, wherein the at least one connector comprises two connectors.

39. (Currently Amended) The joint prosthesis system as set forth in claim 38, wherein the two connectors each comprise autogenous soft or fibrous tissue~~the patient's own tissue~~.